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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/691,541	10/24/2003	Mitsushige Murata	03560.003377	6892

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EXÁMINER

FLORES SANCHEZ, OMAR

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3724

DATE MAILED: 10/19/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/691,541	Applicant(s) MURATA ET AL.	
	Examiner Omar Flores-Sánchez	Art Unit 3724	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 August 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is in response to applicant's amendment received on 08/03/05.

Drawings

2. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the positioning unit/par of grasping planes grasping both end portions of the sheet in a lateral position must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Watanabe et al. (4763167) in view of Fitzpatrick (2,872,981).

Watanabe et al. discloses the invention substantially as claimed including:

- Regarding claims 1-2, 6, 8 and 9 and 10, a punching unit 322, a discharge unit (Fig. 3A);
- Regarding claims 3-5, a stopper 324 having a contact member; and
- Regarding claim 7, the punching unit punches at least two arranged holes in the sheet (Fig. 13C).

Watanabe et al. does not show a positioning unit/par of grasping planes grasping both end portions of the sheet in a lateral position. However, Fitzpatrick teaches the use of a positioning unit/par of grasping planes 30 (see Fig. 6, where the other member is in front of the anvil R') grasping both end portions of the sheet in a lateral position for the purpose of laterally guiding the sheet to the correct position before cutting. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the device of Watanabe et al. by providing positioning unit/par of grasping planes grasping both end portions

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of the sheet in a lateral position as taught by Fitzpatrick in order to obtain a device that laterally guides the sheet to the correct position before cutting.

5. Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Watanabe et al. (4763167) in view of Fitzpatrick (2,872,981).

Watanabe et al. discloses the method for controlling a sheet processing apparatus including the step of: positioning each of sequentially conveyed sheets at a predetermined position (Fig. 9); performing punching 322 of the sheet (Fig. 13C); and discharging a plurality of sheets (Fig. 3A). Watanabe et al. does not show a positioning unit grasping both end portions of the sheet in a lateral position. However, Fitzpatrick teaches the use of a positioning unit 30 (see Fig. 6, where the other member is in front of the anvil R') grasping both end portions of the sheet in a lateral position for the purpose of laterally guiding the sheet to the correct position before cutting. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the device of Watanabe et al. by providing positioning unit grasping both end portions of the sheet in a lateral position as taught by Fitzpatrick in order to obtain a device that laterally guides the sheet to the correct position before cutting.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues that Watanabe et al. does not disclose punching sheets one-by-one as recited in the amended independent claims. However, the claims only cite punching a sheet, which is broad

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term that can be consider to be one or more sheets. Also, the claims do not disclose “punching sheets one-by-one”.

Conclusion

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Omar Flores-Sánchez whose telephone number is 571-272-4507. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner’s supervisor, Allan Shoap can be reached on 571-272-4514. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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10/17/05


KENNETH E. PETERSON
PRIMARY EXAMINER